

Appropriations Committee 2011 – March 1st Re: PCSW Budget

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee,

I serve as co-chair to the Young Women's Leadership Program, a project of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. The PCSW Young Women's Leadership Program provides Connecticut's young women with a network within which to develop themselves and their careers. I respectfully request that the Appropriations Committee sustain funding for the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women in the 2011 Budget.

We continually hear about how so many young people are leaving Connecticut. We need programs like the Young Women's Leadership Program that encourage young women to develop as leaders in Connecticut, whether that is in their family life, professional life, or public life. The Young Women's Leadership Program has nearly 500 members statewide. Our program has conducted body image workshops at college campuses throughout Connecticut, legislative advocacy trainings to students and young professionals, has held networking events and has initiated house parties on self care and professional development.

In addition to our leadership development and networking programs, the YWLP is the voice of young women at the legislature. Too often, the voices of young women, ages 18-35 are left out of policy decisions and debates. The YWLP testifies on legislation, providing a unique perspective on such things as bullying, the solicitation of credit cards, affordable housing, and reproductive health. We engage with our members about the legislative process and incorporate their opinions in the development of our legislative priorities.

The young women I know are still struggling with how to balance work and family, how to negotiate a salary that is comparable to their male counterpart, and how to protect themselves against sexual violence and discrimination. We need female leaders in this state to represent us and our concerns. Please sustain the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women and the Young Women's Leadership Program.

Thank you.

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